A BELIEVERS *Laſt Day* is his *Beſt Day.*

A SERMON

Preached at the Funerall of

Mris MARTHA RANDOLL,

At *Chriſts* Church, *London*, June 28. 1651.

By THOMAS BROOKS, Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Margarets Fiſh*-ſtreet-hill.

Thou wilt guide me by thy Counſell, and after receive me to glory. Pſal. 73. 24.

Light is ſowne for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Pſal. 97. 11.

Ejus eſt timere mortem, qui ad Chriſtum nolit ire. *Cyp.*
Timor mortis pejor, quam ipſa mors. *Eraſ.*
Senibus mors in januis, adoleſcentibus in inſidiis. *Ber.*

LONDON:

Printed, and are to be ſould by *John Hancock* at the firſt Shop in *Popeſ-head*-Alley, next to *Cornhill.* 1657.

To my worthy and beloved Friends

Mr. John Ruſſel, *and* Mris *Martha* his Wife.

And to Mr. *Thomas Randoll*; all happineſſe in this world, and that which is to come.

My dear and worthy Friends;

THe enſuing Sermon was preached upon your importunity, and printed alſo upon the ſame account; you know nothing would ſatisfie your ſpirits but the printing of it, which at laſt made me unwillingly willing to anſwer your deſires: not that I did delight to deny your deſires, nor becauſe I prized it, but becauſe I thought it not good enough for you, nor worthy of that weight that you laid upon it, it being but the fruit of ſome ſhort broken meditations. I have now publiſhed theſe Notes which in all love I preſent to you; they were once in your ear, they are now in your eye, and the Lord keep them ever in your hearts. If there be any thing in this Sermon worth the having, it is not mine but the Lords, through grace; I know that my beſt actions ſtand in need of

ſweet

ſweet odours, a golden cenſer.

Dear Friends, You know we muſt all fall in the wilderneſſe of this world, be gathered to our fathers, go hence and be no more ſeen: *Abraham* and *Sarah* muſt part, *Jacob* and *Rachel* muſt be ſeparated, *David* and his Childe muſt be ſevered. Our daies are numbred, our period of time appointed, and our bounds we cannot paſſe. *All fleſh is as graſſe, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field:* therefore don't mourn as perſons without hope, neither be like *Rachel* that would not be comforted. To that purpoſe take this counſel.

Firſt, Dwell much upon the ſweet behaviour of others, under the loſſe of their neer and dear relations. When God had paſſed the ſentence of death upon *Davids* childe, he *aroſe from the earth, and waſhed, and anointed himſelf, and changed his apparrell, and came into the houſe of the Lord, and worſhipped: then he came to his own houſe, and when he required, they ſet bread before him, and he did eat.* When his ſervants queſtioned this action, he anſwers. *Now he is dead, wherefore ſhould I faſt? Can I bring him back again? I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me.* So when *Aarons* ſons were deſtroyed by fire for their offering up ſtrange fire, *Aaron* holds his peace:

2 Sam. 12. 20.

ver. 23.

Lev. 10, 2, 3.

he bridled his passions and submitted sweetly and quietly to divine Justice. So when it was told *Anaxagoras* that both his sons (which were all he had) were dead; being nothing terrified there with he answered, * I knew I begat mortall creatures. *Dransi* people in *Thrace*, bury their children with great joy, but at their birth lament grievously, in regard of the miseries that are like to befall them while they live.

* *Sciebam me genuisse mortales.*

Secondly, In time of crosses, losses and miseries, 'tis the wisdom of beleevers to look more upon the Crown then upon the crosse, to dwell more upon glory then upon misery, to eye more the brasen Serpent that is lifted np, then the fiery Serpent that bites and stings. *Basil* speaketh of some Martyrs that were cast out all night naked in a cold frosty time, and were to be burned the next day, how they comforted themselves in this manner; *The winter is sharp but Paradise is sweet*: here we shiver for cold, but the bosome of *Abraham* will make amends for all. *Galen* writes of a fish called *Uranoscopos* that hath but one eye, and yet looks continually up to heaven: a Christian under the crosse should alwaies have an eye looking up to heaven, that so his soul may not faint, and he may give glory to God in the day of visitation.

2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. Heb. 10 34. & 11. 24, 25, 26, 35 & 12 1, 2, 3. *Basil ad 40 Martyr.*

Tolle cœlum nullus ero, said the Philosopher.

on. It is recorded of *Lazarus*, that after his resurrection from the dead he was never seen to laugh, his thoughts and affections were so fixt in heaven though his body was on earth, that he could not but slight temporal things, his heart being set upon eternall things. A man (saith one) would dwell in this contemplation of heaven and be loth to come out of it. Nay saith another, a man might age himself in it, and sooner grow old then weary.

Let heaven be a mans object, and the earth will be his abject. *Chrysostome. Augustine.*

Thirdly, Compare your mercies and your losses together, and you shall finde that your mercies will wonderfully outweigh your losses; you have lost one mercy, you enjoy many mercies, What is the losse of a Wife, a Childe, or any other temporall mercy, to a souls enjoyment of the favour of God, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, hopes of Heaven, *&c.* Besides you enjoy many temporall mercies that many of the precious sons of *Zion* want, *&c.*

Fourthly, Consider seriously of the reasons of Gods stripping his people of their neerest and their deerest mercies; and they are these,

1. For a triall of the strength and power of their graces. 'Tis not every crosse nor every losse that tries the strength of a Christians graces: *Job* held

bravely in the face of many afflictions for a time, but when he was thorowly wet to the skin, then he acts like a man rather void of grace, then like a man that did excell all others in grace. When God burns up the out-houſes but leaves the Palace ſtanding; when he takes away the ſervant but leaves the childe; when he gathers here a flower and there a flower out of mens gardens, but leaves the flowers that are the delight of their eyes and the joy of their hearts, they bare it patiently and ſweetly: but when he burns up the Palace, and takes away the childe, and gathers the faireſt flower in all our garden, then we uſually ſhew our ſelves to be but men, yea to be weak men paſſionately crying out, *O my ſon Abſolom, my ſon, my ſon Abſolom, would God I had died for thee O Abſolom my ſon, my ſon.*

God tried the ſtrength of *Abrahams* faith, and the ſtrength of *Jobs* patience, and the ſtrength of *Moſes* meekneſſe, and the ſtrength of *Davids* zeal, and the ſtrength of *Pauls* courage to the utmoſt God will not only try the truth, but he will alſo try the ſtrength of every grace that is in a beleever ſooner or later. Exod. 12. 27, 30, 31,

It is the obſervation of *Theodoret*, that when God ſmote *Pharohs* firſt born, he drew bloud of the arm for the cure of the head: whichbecauſe

2. God paſſes the ſentence of death upon mens deareſt mercies, that himſelf may be more dreaded, and that his precious ſervants and their counſel may be the better minded and regarded. The *Ægyptians* trembled not under ſeverall judgements, nor minded not what *Moſes* and *Aaron* ſaid till God ſmote their firſt-born, and then they tremble, and then the ſervants of the Lord and their counſel found better quarter with them

then

then formerly they had done. Ah Friends, Has the Lord ſmitten your firſt-born (as I may ſay,) then look to it (as you tender the honour of God, the advancement of the Goſpel, the peace of your own conſciences, the ſtopping of the mouthes of the wicked, and the gladding of thoſe hearts that God would not have ſadded,) that God be more dreaded, and that his ſervants, and his ſervices be more owned, loved and regarded. The people of God, and the Ordinances of God, are to God as his firſt-born: and they that make light of Gods firſt born, God will make as light of their firſt-born. Theſe *Ægyptians* had ſlain *Iſrael* Gods firſt-born, and therefore God ſmites their firſt-born. My deſire and prayer ſhall be, that Gods removing and taking away your firſt-born (as I may ſay) may be the making of more room in your boſomes for God, Chriſt, Saints and Ordinances, that ſo your great loſſe may be turned into the greateſt gain. And certainly, if this phyſick, this potion that is given you by an outſtretched hand from Heaven don't work this, the next potion will be far more bitter.

it mended not thereupon came all to confuſion.

Joh. 5. 14.

3. God paſſes the ſentence of death upon mens neereſt and deareſt mercies, that he may win them to a more com-

pleat and full dependance upon his blessed self: man is a creature apt to hang and rest upon creature props: *I looked on my right hand, and beheld* (saith the Psalmist) *but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul*, Well, what does he do now all props fail him? why now he sweetly leanes upon God. *I cried unto thee O Lord, I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.* *Cynagirus* an *Athenian* Captain used great valour in the *Persian* war, pursuing his enemies that were laden with the rich spoil of his countrey, and were ready to set sail and be gone: he held the ship with his right hand, and when that was cut off, he held it with the left; that also being cut off he held it with the stumps till his armes were cut off, and then he held it with his teeth till his head was cut off. It is the very temper of most men and women in the world, they will hold upon one prop, and if God cut off that, then they will catch hold on another, *&c.* till God cut off all their props, and then they will come and rest and centre in God, in whom are all their wel-springs.

Psal. 124. 4.

Ver. 5.

Psal. 87. 7.

4 God strips his people of their dearest mercies, that he may work their hearts to a more strict and diligent search and examination of their own hearts & ways, that

that they may ſay with the Church, *Let us ſearch and try our wayes, and turn to the Lord our God.* The Hebrew word that is rendred *ſearch*, ſignifies to ſearch as you would doe to find out a diſguiſed perſon that puts himſelf into a ſtrange habit that he might not be diſcovered. When Gods hand, when Gods rod is upon our backs, our hands muſt be upon our hearts, and we muſt cry out, What evil have we done, what evil have we done; *Seneca* reports of one *Sextius*, who would every night ask himſelf three queſtions; 1. What evil haſt thou healed to-day? 2. What vice haſt thou ſtood againſt this day? 3. In what part art thou bettered this day? When the ſtorm beats ſtrong upon you, you had need to ſee what *Jonah* is aſleep at the bottom of your ſouls, that ſo he being diſcovered and caſt over-board, your ſouls may be ſafe, for in the drowning of your ſins lies the ſecurity of your ſoul.

Lam. 3. 39, 40. 48.

חפש Chaphas.

5. He ſtrips his people of their deareſt outward mercies, that they may be more compaſſionate toward thoſe that are or ſhall be in the ſame condition with themſelves. The *Jews* at this day, in their very nuptiall feaſts and mirth, break a glaſſe with wine in remembrance of *Jeruſalem*, ſaying when they throw it down, Thus was *Jeruſalem* broken, and what

That ſentence likes me well for you that he ſaid of himſelf, I have no wit but weeping.

what they ſpil in wine they fil with tears. Is it not a ſhame to have the ſame Name, the ſame Faith the ſame Chriſt, the ſame profeſſion, &c. and to deſire alwayes to tread on Roſes, to be embarked in this great Ship of Chriſtianity with ſo many brave ſpirits, and to go under hatches to ſleep like the out-caſts and ſcorn of humane nature? Saints ſhould be like two Lute ſtrings that are tuned one to another, no ſooner one is ſtruck but the other trembles.

Diogenes taxed the folly of the men of his time, that they undervalued the beſt things, but overvalued the worſt, ah that this were not the ſin and ſhame of profeſſors in theſe daies.

6. God ſtrips his people of their neereſt and deareſt outward mercies, that they may the more prize and the better taſte ſpirituall and heavenly mercies, he takes away uncertain riches, that they may the more prize certain riches; he takes away naturall ſtrength, that they may the more prize ſpirituall ſtrength; he takes away the creature, that they may more prize their Saviour. Spirituall and heavenly things are of neereſt and greateſt concernment to you, ſpirituals, will only abide with you in all changes, ſpirituals can only ſatisfie your ſouls. The language of a gracious ſpirit is this; Ah Lord, as what I have if offered to thee pleaſeth not thee without my ſelf, ſo the good things I have from thee, though they may refreſh me, yet they cannot ſatisfie me without thy ſelf.

Joh. 14. 8

The

The fifth and laſt word of counſel that I ſhall give you, is this, Conſider ſeriouſly and frequently, that Gods taking away or removing of one mercy, is but his making of way for another, and uſually for a better mercy. He took from *David* a *Michal*, and gave him a wife *Abigal*, an *Abſolom* and gave him a *Solomon*. He took away the bodily preſence of Chriſt from his Diſciples, but gave them more abundantly of his ſpirituall preſence, which was far the choicer and the ſweeter mercy. God will alwayes make that word good, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe*, or as the Greek hath it, *I will not leave you as Orphans or fatherleſſe Children*, no, I will come and comfort you on every ſide, and I will make up all your wants, and be better to you then all your mercies. *For your braſſe I will give you ſilver, and for your iron you ſhall have gold*, &c.

Joh. 16. 7, 8. *Hujuſmodi lucri, dulcis odor:* the ſmell of this gain is ſweet to many.

Joh. 14. 18. ὀρφανὸς *ab* ὀρφνὴ

Iſa. 60. 17.

To draw to a cloſe, let that dead man or dead woman be lamented, whom Hell harboureth, whom the Devil devoureth, whom Divine Juſtice tormenteth: But let thoſe whoſe departed ſouls Angels accompany, Chriſt imboſometh, and all the Court of Heaven comes forth to welcom, account immortality a mercy, and be grieved that they are ſo long detained from the ſweet company of Chriſt, *&c.*

I deſire you (and all others that ſhall read what is here written) to overlook the miſtakes of the Printer, if you meet with any, I having no time to wait upon the Preſſe to correct what may be found amiſſe. The peruſall and acceptance of what I here preſent in love, I ſhall leave your judgements, and reſt,

Yours to love and ſerve

in our deareſt Lord,

THOMAS BROOKS.

A Saints

A Saints Laſt Day is his Beſt Day.

Beloved, I am here at this time to ſpeak a word to the living, my buſineſs being not to ſpeak any thing of the dead. Be pleaſed therefore to caſt your eye upon

ECCLES. 7. 1.

A good Name is better then precious Oyntment, and the day of death, then the day of ones birth.

I Shall ſtand upon the latter part of this Verſe at this time.

And the day of death, then the day of ones birth.

THE *Greeks* ſay, *That the beginning of a mans Nativity, is the begetting of his Miſery.* In *Jcb* 14.1. *Man that is born of a woman, is born to trouble* and ſorrow. The Hebrew word that is there rendred (*Born*) ſignifieth alſo generated or conceived, to note to us, that man is miſerable as ſoon as he is warm in the womb;

ילוד *Jeludh.*

womb; he comes crying into the world. Before ever the Child ſpeaks, he Propheſies by his tears of his enſuing ſorrows.

A fletu vitam auſpicatur, ſaith *Seneca.*

And this made *Solomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his diſſolution before the day of his Coronation. But not to hold you longer from what is mainly intended. The Obſervation that I ſhall ſpeak to at this time, is this,

That a Believers laſt day is his beſt day, his dying day is better then his birth day.

This will be a very ſweet and uſefull point to all believers. I ſhall firſt demonſtrate the truth that it is ſo, and then make ſome uſe of this Point to our ſelves.

The firſt thing that doth with open mouth ſpeak out this truth, is this, That death is a change of place. A believer when he dyeth, he doth but change his place; he changeth Earth for Heaven, a Wilderneſſe for a *Canaan*, an *Ægypt* for a Land of *Goſhen*, a dunghil for a Palace. As it is ſaid of *Judas*, that *he went to his place*. A ſoul out of Chriſt is not in his place, beneath is his place. So when a believer dyeth, he goes to his place, Heaven, the boſome of Chriſt is his place. And that ſpeaks out the truth aſſerted, *That a Believers dying day is his beſt day.*

2 Cor. 5. 6. A believer now is not in his place, but his

his ſoul is ſtill working and warring, and he cannot reſt till he comes to center in the boſome of Chriſt. This *Paul* well underſtood, when he ſaid, *I long to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt.* I would fain weigh Anchor, hoyſe ſayle, and away home. And upon this account thoſe precious ſouls groaned for deliverance, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *For this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed with our houſe which is from Heaven.* What is the ground? why 'tis this, *While we are in the body, we are abſent from the Lord.* We be not in our place, and therefore we groan to be at home, that is, to be in Heaven, to be in the boſome of Chriſt, which is our proper place, our moſt deſirable home.

Phil. 1. 23.

Verſ. 6.

The ſecond thing which doth demonſtrate the truth aſſerted, is this, That death is a change of company. The beſt that breatheth in this world, muſt live with the wicked, and converſe with the wicked, *&c.* and this is a part of their miſery, 'tis their Hell on this ſide heaven. This ſtuck upon the ſpirit of *David*, *Woe is me that I am conſtrained to be in Meſhech, and to dwell in the Tents of Kedar,* &c. And ſo *Jer.* 9. 2. *O that I had in the wilderneſſe a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and goe from them, for they be all adulterers, an aſſembly of treacherous men.* And this was that

Pſal. 120. 5. I have read of a good Gentlewoman, who being near death, cryed out, O Lord let me not go to hell

where the wicked are, for thou knowest that I never loved their company in the time of life. ἐβασάνιζεν. Vide *Bezam.* Heb. 12. 22, 23.

that that did vex and tear *Lots* righteous soul, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7, 8. *His soul was vexed from day to day with their unlawful deeds.* The word signifies to *Rack*, he was racked to see their unlawfull deeds. O but death is a change of company; a man doth change the company of profane persons, of vile persons, *&c.* for the company of Angels, and the company of weak Christians, for the company of just men made perfect. That is a remarkable place, *We are come to Mount Sion* (saith the Apostle) *and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the generall Assembly, and Church of the first born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.* Here is a change indeed. Death is a change of company, as well as a change of place. And if this be but well weighed, it must needs be granted, *That a believers dying day is better then his birth day.*

3 Death is a change of imployment. A believing soul when he dyes, changeth his work and imployment. I open it thus, The work of a believer in this world lyes in praying, groaning, sighiug, mourning, wrestling, and fighting, *&c.* And we see throughout the Scripture, that the choycest Saints that have had the highest Visions

sions of God, have driven this trade, they have spent their time in praying, groaning, mourning, wrastling and fighting, *Eph.* 6.10. *for we wrastle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against Rulers of the darknesse of this world; against spirituall wickednesse in high places.* The truth is, the veey life of a Beleever is a continuall warfare; and his businesse is to be in the field alwayes: they have to deal with subtle enemies, malicious enemies, wakefull enemies, and watchfull enemies; with such enemies; that threw down *Adam* in Paradise the most innocent man in the world; and that threw down *Moses* the meekest man in the world, and *Job* the patienst man in the world, and *Joshua* the most couragions man in the world, and *Paul* the best Apostle in the world, *&c.* A Christians life is a warfare, *Job* saith, *All the time of my warfare will I wait till my change come*: I am still a fighting saith *Job* with lusts and corruptions within; and with devils and men abroad; *All the time of my warfare will I waite till my change come*: So in the 2 *Tim.* 4.8 *I have fought the good fight of faith, &c.* And so in the 2 *Tim.* 2.4. *No man that warreth intangleth himself with the affairs of this life, &c.* Death is a change of em-

Probus a valiant Roman Emperors Motto was (*Pro stipe labor*) No fight, no pay. So I say, No fight no Crown, no fight no Heaven.

Job 14. 14. צבאי

Alexander sent messengers to *Mandanius* a famous Philosopher, to tell him that if he would doe so and so, he should be rewarded; and if he did not, he should be put to death. The Philosopher answered the

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Messengers, That for his gifts he esteemed them worth nothing, seeing his own Country could furnish him with necessaries; and as for death, he did not fear it, but wish it rather, in that it was a change unto a more happy estate. So far did meer Philosophy carry men in the opinion of felicity.

ployment, it changeth this hard service; this work that lies in mourning, wrastling, and fighting; for joying and singing *Hallelujahs* to the Almighty. Now no prayers, but praises; no fighting and wrastling, but dancing and triumphing. Can a believing soul look upon this glorious change, and not say, Surely *Better is the day of a beleevers death then the day of his birth.* Death is the winding-sheet that wipes away all tears from the beleevers eyes, *Rev.* 7. 9.

Death is a change of enjoyments as well as a change of Employments. I shall expresse this in 3 considerable things.

1. It is a change of our more dark and obscure enjoyment of God, for a more clear and sweet enjoyment of God. I say the best Beleever that breaths in this world that doth see and enjoy most of God, and the visions of his glory, yet he enjoys not God so clearly, but that he is much in the dark The Apostle *Paul* was a man that was high in his enjoyments of God, yet while he was here in the flesh, he did but see as through a glasse: We *see through a glasse darkly*; but then face to face; then we shall know even as we are known. God told *Moses* that he could not see his face and live: the truth is, we are able to bear but little of the discoveries of God, there being

1 Cor. 13. 12. αἰνίγματι. In a riddle.

being such a mighty majesty and glory in all the spirituall discoveries of God. We are weak and able to take in little of God; we have but dark apprehensions of God; witnesse our tears, sighs, groans and complaints; because we go forward and backward: We look on the right hand and on the left (as *Job* speaks) and God hideth himself that we cannot see him. *Plutarch* tels of *Endoxus*, that he would be willing to be burnt up presently by the Sun, so he might be admitted to come so near it as to learn the nature of it. This is upon the heart of beleevers, Lord let us be burnt up so we may see thee more in all thy glorious manifestations, let us be poor, let us be any thing so that we may be taken up into a more clear enjoyment of thy self. Ask them that live highest in the enjoyment of God, What is your greatest burthen? and they will tell you, this is our greatest burden, that our apprehensions of God are no more clear, that we cannot see him face to face whom our souls do dearly love: Oh but now in Heaven Saints shall have a clear vision of God: there be no clouds nor mists in Heaven.

Job 23. 8, 9.

Chrysostome professeth, that the want of the enjoyment of God would be a far greater Hell to him, then the feeling of any punishment.

2. It is a change of our imperfect and incompleat enjoyments of God, for a more compleat and perfect enjoyment of him. As no Beleever hath a cleer sight

of God here, ſo no beleever hath a full and perfect ſight of God here. In *Job* 26, 14. how little a portion is heard of him (ſpeaking of God) and of that is heard, ah how little a portion is underſtood! So in 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Now we ſee through a glaſſe darkly, but then face to face:* Now I know in part, but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am known. The ſoul while it is here, dares not but ſay I enjoy ſomething of God, and that that I would not want for a thouſand worlds; yet my enjoyment is not full. If you ſhould ſay, Souls why do you wait upon God in this Ordinance and that Ordinance? they will anſwer, That we may enjoy God more fully. *Fly away ſpeedily my beloved*: what is the meaning of this language but this; O that I might be filled with the fullneſſe of God. There is no complaints in Heaven, becauſe there is no wants. O, when death ſhall give the fatall ſtroke, there ſhall be an exchange of earth for Heaven, of imperfect enjoyments for perfect enjoyments of God; then the ſoul ſhall be ſwallowed up with a full enjoyment of God; no corner of the ſoul ſhall be left empty, but all ſhall be filled up with the fullneſſe of God: here they receive grace for grace, but in Heaven they ſhall receive glory for glory. God keeps the beſt wine till laſt;

דבר
Dabar. i. e. A word or thing O how little a word, how little a thing is heard of him. 'Tis an excellent expreſſion that *Auguſtine* hath, The good things of eternall life (ſaith he) are ſo many, that they exceed number; ſo precious, that they exceed eſtimation; ſo great, that they exceed meaſure. *Eſſe Chriſtu cum Paulo, magna ſecuritas: eſſe Paulū cum Chriſto, ſumma felicitas.* Ber. For Chriſt to be with *Pau* was the grea

last; the best of God, Christ and Heaven, is behind: here we have but some sips, some tasts of God, fullnesse is reserved for a glorious state: He that sees most of God here, sees but his back-parts, his face is a Jewel of that splendor and glory that no eye can behold but a glorified eye: our hearts are like a viol glass, which will not fill on a sudden, though it lye in the midst of the sea where all fullnesse is. The best Christian is able to take in but little of God, their hearts are like the widowes vessel that could receive but a little oyl. Sin the world and creatures, do take up so much room in the best hearts, that God is put upon giving out himself by a little and little, as parents do to their children; but in Heaven God will communicate himself fully at once to the soul, grace shall then be swallowed up of glory.

3. It is a change of a more inconstant and transient enjoyment of God, for a more constant and permanent enjoyment of God. Here the Saints enjoyment of God is unconstant; one day they enjoy God, and another day the soul sits and complains in anguish of spirit. He that should comfort my soul stands afar off, my glasse is out, my Sun is set, and what can make up the want of this sun; as all candle light, Star light, and torch light,

test security, but for *Paul* to be with Christ, was the chiefest felicity. *Chrysostome* saith It were possible that all the sufferings of the Saints should be laid upon one man, it were not worth one hours being in Heaven. Such is the greatnesse and fulnesse of that glory above. The Saints Motto is, *Migremus hinc, migremus hinc*, Let us goe hence, let us goe hence.

By death Saints come to a fixed and invariable eternity. *Nescio qui erit, quod ista vita non orit*, &c. Auguſt. *i. e.* What will that life be, or rather what will not that life be, ſince all good either is not at all, or is in ſuch a life, light which place cannot comprehend, noiſes and muſick which time cannot vaniſh away, odours which are never diſſipated, a feaſt which is never conſumed, a bleſſing which eternity beſtoweth, but eternity ſhall never ſee at an end.

light, cannot make up the want of the light of the Sun; ſo when the Son of Righteouſneſſe hides his face, it is not all crature comforts that can make up the want of his countenance. *David* ſometimes could ſay, that *God was his portion, and his ſalvation, and his ſtrong tower*; and what not? and yet preſently cries out, *Why art thou caſt down O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* In one place he ſaith, *I ſhall never be moved*, and yet preſently it follows, *Thou hidſt thy face from me and I was troubled* And this is the ſtate of a beleever in this world. But in heaven there ſhall no clouds ariſe between the Lord and a believing heart: God will not one day ſmile and another day frown; one day take a ſoul in his arms, and another day lay that ſoul at his feet; This is his dealing with his people here. But in heaven there is nothing but kiſſes and embraces, nothing but a perpetuall enjoyment of God. When once God takes the ſoul unto himſelf, it ſhall never be night with it any more; never dark with that ſoul more, *&c.* all tears ſhall then be wiped away. That is a ſweet word in the 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17, 18. *And ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.* There are ſaith *Muſculus*, Angels and Arch angels in Heaven, I

but

but they do not make heaven, Christ is the most sparkling Diamond in the ring of glory. It is heaven and happinesse enough to see Christ, and to be for ever with Christ. Now, O what a glorious change is this? Mythinks these things should make us long for our dying day: and account this life but a lingering death.

5. Consider this, Death is a change that puts an end to all externall and internall changes. What is the whole life of a man but a life of changes? Death is a change that puts an end to all externall changes: here you change your joy for sorrow, your health for sickneſſe, your strength for weakneſſe, your honour for dishonour, your plenty for poverty, your beauty for deformity, your friends for foes, your silver for brasse, and your gold for copper: Now the comforts of a man are smiling, the next hour they are dying, *&c.* All temporals are as transitory as a hasty headlong torrent, a ship, a bird, an arrow, a post, that passeth by. Man himself, the King of these outward comforts; what is he but a meer nothing? the dream of a dream, a shadow, a bubble, a flash, a blast. Now death puts an end to all externall changes: there shall be no more sickneſſe, no more complaints, no more wants, *&c.*

There is nothing excellent that is not perpetuall, saith *Gregory Nazian.* Philosophers could say, that he was never a happy man that might afterwards become miserable. 1 Sam. 16. Psal. 42. Psal. 30. 6, 7. Eternity is that *Unum perpetuum hodie.*

And then it puts an end to all internall changes.

Now the Lord ſmiles upon the ſoul, and anon he frowns upon the ſoul: Now God gives aſſiſtance to conquer ſin, anon the man is carried captive by his ſin; now he is ſtrengthned againſt the temptation, anon he fals before the temptation *&c.* *Job* carried it out bravely in the midſt of ſtorms, and ſpeaks like an Angell: But when *Job* was wet to the skin, and the Arrows of the Almighty ſtuck in him, and his day was turned into night, and his rejoycing into mourning, *&c.* then a man would have thought him a devil incarnate by his curſing. But death puts an end to internall changes, as well as externall changes: Now the ſoul ſhall be tempted no more, ſin no more, be foyled no more. Now you may judge by this, that a Chriſtians dying day is his beſt day. Death is another *Moſes*, it delivers believers out of bondage, and from making brick in *Ægypt*, It is a day or year of Jubilee to a gracious ſpirit, the year wherein he goes out free from all thoſe cruell taskmaſters which it had long groaned under. The Heathen gods held death to be mans *ſummum bonum*, his cheifeſt good; therefore when one of them had built and dedicated the Temple at *Del-*

phos,

phos, he asked of *Apollo* for his recompence the thing that was best for man: the Oracle told him, that he should go home, and within three daies he should have it; within which time he died; Thus the very heathens themselves have consented to this truth, That a mans dying day is his best day.

6. Death is a Change that brings the soul to an unchangeable Rest, it is a bringing of the soul to bed to a state of eternall rest. That is the last demonstration of the Point, that a beleevers dying day is his best day. Now while we are here the soul is in a tosse. The best man in the world that is highest and cleerest in his enjoyments of God, is too often like to *Noahs* dove that found no rest? either he wants some externall mercy or internall mercy, and will do so till the soul be swallowed up in the everlasting enjoyments of God: But death brings a man to an unchangeable rest. In *Rev.* 14. 13. *I heard a voice from heaven saying to me Write, from henceforth blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*; Why? *for they rest from their labours, &c.* O saith he, Write it down as a thing of worth and weight, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord for they rest from their labours*, &c. Death brings the soul to unchangeable rest. In *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *The*

Death is a rest from the trouble of our particular callings; it is a rest from afflictions, a rest from persecutions, a rest from temptation, a rest from desertion, a rest from sin, and a rest from sorrow. Gen. 3. 8.

Laurence Saunders kissing the stake, said, Welcome the crosse of Christ, welcome everlasting life. *Funius* the Italian Martyr kissed him that brought him word of his execution.

The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart, &c. he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightnesse. O, death is a change that brings a soul to unchangeable rest, it brings a soul abed. This was that that made *Paul* long *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; And the *Corinthians* to groan for deliverance. It was a notable saying of blessed *Cooper*, Many a day have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience or distrust (saith he) but because I am weary of sin and fearfull to fall into it. You know how the Martyrs hugged the stake, and welcomed every Messenger of death that came to them, and clap'd their hands in the midst of the flames. Death is a believers Coronation day, it is his marriage day, It is a rest from sin, a rest from sorrow, a rest from afflictions and temptations, *&c.* Death to a believer is an entrance into *Abrahams* bosome, into Paradise, into the *new Jerusalem*, into the joy of his Lord. And thus much for the doctrinall part: You see that it is clear by these six things, *That a Believers dying day is his best day*, and *the day of his death better then the day of his birth.*

I might by many other arguments demonstrate this truth to you, but let these suffice,

ſuffice, becauſe I would not unwillingly keep you longer from the uſe and Application of the point: Application being the life of all teaching. Now the

Firſt Uſe ſhall be this. Then never mourn immoderately at the death of any believer, let them be the moſt excellent and uſefull that ever lived. Death is to them the greateſt gain; And it ſpeaks out much ſelfiſhneſſe in us to be more taken with the gain and benefit that redounds to us by their lives, then with the happineſſe and glory that redounds to them by their deaths. In the primitive times when God had paſt the ſentence of death upon their deareſt comforts, Chriſtians did carry it at a more high ſweet and noble rate, then now adaies they do. Remember this, death doth that (I ſay) in a moment, that no graces, no duties, nor no ordinances could do for a man all his life time; it frees a man from thoſe diſeaſes, corruptions, temptations, *&c.* that no duties, nor graces, nor Ordinances could do. When *Abram* came to mourn for his deceaſed *Sarah*, he mourned moderately for her as is imported by a ſmall Caph in the word *Libcothath*, that ſignifies to weep, in that Hebrew word there is one little letter extraordinary to note that *Abraham* wept but a little for her, not becauſe

Death is not *mors hominu*, but *mors peccati* not the death of the man but the death of his ſin. Gen. 23. 2.

לספוד לשרה ולבכותה׃

cause she was old and overworn (as some Rabbins say,) but because her dying day was her best day. When *Luther* that famous instrument of God buried his daughter, he was not seen to shed a tear. So Mr. *Wheatly* (who was famous in his time) when as he had preached his own childes Funerall Sermon upon this Subject, *The will of the Lord be done*, He and his wife laid their own childe in the grave. That is the first Use, let us not mourn immoderately for any beleevers death.

The people in *Thrace* mourn and greatly lament at the birth of their children, because of the sorrowes and troubles they are born to, and they greatly joy and rejoyce at the death of their children, because death is the funerall of all their sorrows. Death is not such as you, as som would paint it.

Then in the next place, fear not death; Compose your spirits; say not of death as that wicked Prince said to the Prophet *Hast thou found me O my Enemie?* but rather long for it, not to be rid of troubles, but that the soul may be taken up to a more clear and full enjoyment of God. Your dying day is your best day. Good *Jacob* dies with a sweet composed spirit; he cals for his children, and blesseth, and kisseth them, and gathers up his feet into his bed and dies. *Moses* that morning that the Messenger came to him, and told him he must die, he goes up the hill, sees the Land of *Canaan* at a distance, and dies. *Cato* a Heathen man told *Cæsar*, that he feared his pardon more then the pain that he threatned: *Joseph* built his sepulchre in his own gar-

It was the saying of an Heathen man, That the whole life of a man should be nothing else but (*Meditatio mortis*)

garden. And ſome Philoſophers had their graves alwaies open before their gates, that going out and coming in they might alwaies think of death for in life they found comforts to be rare, croſſes frequent, pleaſures momentany, and pains permanent. Believers, your dying day is your beſt day; Oh then be not afraid of death, and that you may not, remember that it is not ſuch a ſleight matter as ſome make it, to be unwilling to die. There is much reproach caſt upō God by believers being unwilling to die; you talk much of God, Heaven, and Glory, *&c.* and yet when you ſhould come to go and ſhare in this glory, you ſhrug, and ſay, Spare me a little: Is not this a reproach to the God of glory? But that this counſell may ſtick upon you, remember theſe five things.

1. Chriſts death is a meritorious death. Can a believer think upon the death of Chriſt as meriting peace with God, Pardon of ſin, juſtification, glorification, and yet be afraid to die? What, Is the death of Chriſt thus meritorious. and ſhall we ſtill be unwilling to depart?

2. Is not death a ſword in your Fathers hand? It is true, a ſword in a mad mans hand, or in an enemies hand, might make one tremble, but when the ſword is

a meditation of death. See Deut. 32. 29. *Alexander* the Great did aſk the Indian Philoſopher how long a man ſhould live; ſaith he, untill he think it better to dye then to live.

is in the fathers hands, the childe doth not fear. Grant that death is a sword, yet why should the childe fear and be afraid, when it is in the fathers hand that will be sure to handle it so as he shall not be hurt or cut by it.

3. Remember that Christs death is a death conquering death; he hath taken away the sting of death that it cannot hurt you; and his death is a death sanctifying and a death-sweetning death; he hath by his death sanctified and sweetned death to us.

Death is a fall that came by a fall, to die is to be no more unhappy, if we consider death aright ☉ (saith one) that I could see death, not as it was, but as thou Lord hast now made it, it is the greatest Monarch and the ancienst King of the world; Death reigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, saith St. *Paul*, oh but the Lord Jesus hath as it were disarmed death, and triumpht over death, he hath taken away its sting so that it cannot sting us, and we may play with it, and put it into our bosomes, as we may a snake whose sting is pulled out. The Apostle upon this consideration challengeth death, and out-braves death, and bids death do his worst in that, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57.

4. Did not Christ willingly leave his fathers bosome for your sake? Did he not

The fear of death is worse then the pains of death. (*Timor mortis ipsa morte prior*) because fear of death kils us often, whereas death it self can do it but once. *Ejus est timere mortem qui ad Christum nolit ire.* *Cyp.* Let him fear death that is loth to go to Christ. *Mori non metuo sed damnari metuo.* I fear not to dye, but I fear to be damned, saith one. *Una guttula plus valet quam cœlum & terra.* *Luther* speaking of the blood of Christ, saith, that one little drop is more worth then

not willingly die for you; did Christ plead thus, These robes are too good for me to leave off, this Crown too glorious for me to lay aside, I am too great to suffer for such a people: No, but he readily leaves his fathers bosome, he laies down his Crown, and puts off his robes, and suffers a cursed, cruell, and ignominious death. Ah soules you should reason thus, Did Christ die for me that I might live with him? I will not therefore desire to live long from him, all men go willingly to see him whom they love, and shall I be unwilling to die, that I may see him whom my soul loves? Shall Christ lay by all his glory and pomp, and marry a poor soul that had neither portion nor proportion: and shall this soul be unwilling to go home to such a husband? O, think of it you souls that are unwilling to die.

Present life is not (*vita, sed via ad vitam*) life but the way to life; for when we cease to be men we begin to be as Angels, they are only creatures of inferiour nature that are pleased with the present: Man is a future creature, the eye of his soul looks back, the Labourer hastens from his work to his bed, the marriner rows hard to gain the port, the traveller is glad when he is neer his Inne, so should Saints when they are neer death,

Heaven and Earth.

If the soules under the Altar, cry *usq; quo Domine*, how long Lord, if they solicit for the day of judgement, why not I for the day of death, since deaths day is but the eve of Gods day.

Zeno said, I have no fear but of old Age.

death, becauſe then they are neer heaven they are neer their Inne.

5. Are you not compleat in Chriſt? why ſhould a believer be afraid to die that ſtands compleat before God in the righteouſneſſe of the Lord Jeſus? If we ſhould appear in our own righteouſneſſe, in our own duties, it would be dreadfull to think of dying, but a believer is compleat in him, *&c. Ye are compleat in him, Col.* 2. 10. In *Revelat.* 14. 4, 5. they are ſaid to be *without fault before the Throne of God.* And in *Cant.* 4. 7. *Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no ſpot in thee*: A believer when he dies he appears before God in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt; all the ſpots and blemiſhes of his ſoul are covered with the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which is a matchleſſe, ſpotleſſe, pearleſſe righteouſneſſe. Chriſts Spouſe hath perfection of beauty, ſhe is all glorious within and without, ſhe is ſpotleſſe and blameleſſe, ſhe is the faireſt among women, that ſhe may be a meet mate for him that is fairer then all the children of men, *Pſal.* 45. 2. The Saints are as that Tree of Paradiſe, *Gen.* 3. fair to his eye, and pleaſant to his palat, or as *Abſalom* in whom there was no blemiſh from head to foot, think of theſe things to ſweeten your laſt changes and to make you long to

Ipſe unus erit tibi omnia quia in ipſo uno bono, bona ſunt omnia. Aug. One Chriſt will be to thee in ſtead of all things ſelfe becauſe in him are all good things to be found.

to be in the bosome of Christ.

Sixthly, consider that the Saints dying day is to them the Lords pay day. Every Prayer shall then have its Answer, all hungrings and thirstings shall be filled and satisfied; every sigh, groan and tear that hath fallen from the Saints eyes, shall then be recompenced. Then they shall be paid and recompenced for all publick service, and all family service and all closet service. Now a Crown shalbe set upon their heads, and glorious Robes put upon their backs, and golden Scepters put into their hands, their dying day being the Lords pay day, they shall hear the Lord saying to them, *Well done good and faithfull servants, enter into your Masters joy.* In that day they shall find that God is not like *Antiochus*, who promised often, but seldome gave; no. Then God will make good all those golden and glorious Promises that he hath made to them, especially those that are cited in the margent. * Now God will give them gold for brasse, and silver for Iron, felicity for misery, plenty for poverty, honour for dishonour, freedome for bondage, Heaven for Earth, an immortal Crown for a mortal Crown.

That is not death but life, that joins the dying man to Christ; and that is not life but death, which separates the living man from Christ.

* Rev. 2. 10. & 3. 4. 12. 21. & 7. 16, 17.

Seventhly, consider this, The way to glory is by misery, the way to life is by death. In this world we are all *Benonies*,

A man will easily swallow a bitter Pill to get health. The Physitian helps us not without pain, and yet we reward him for it.

Death to a believer is the gate of Heaven, it is *Januæ uita*) the door of life, it conveyes us out of the wilderneſſe into *Canaan*, out of a troubleſome Sea into a quiet Haven. John 14.1,2,3

the Sons of ſorrow, the way to Heaven is by weeping croſſe; Chriſts paſſion week was before his aſcenſion day, none paſſeth to Paradiſe but by burning Seraphims, we cannot goe out of *Ægypt*, but through the Red Sea, the children of *Iſrael* came to *Jeruſalem* through the Valley of tears, and croſſed the ſwift River of *Jordan* before they came to the ſweet waters of *Siloam*. There is no paſſing into Paradiſe, but under the flaming Sword of this Angel death; there is no coming to that glorious City above, but through this ſtrait dark, dirty lane; no wiping all tears from your eyes, but with your winding-ſheet, which ſhould make you entertain death (*Non ut hoſtis ſed ut hoſpes*) not as a Foe, but as a Friend, not as a ſtranger, but as a gueſt that you had long looked for, and bid welcome death more bleſſed then your birth. Every man is willing to goe to his home, though the way that leads to it be never ſo dark dirty or dangerous, and ſhal believers be unwilling to go to their homes, becauſe they are to go through a dark entry to thoſe glorious lightſome and eternal Manſions that Chriſt hath prepared for them? ſurely no.

Eighthly, conſider, That while we are in this world, our weak and imperfect, and diſeaſed bodies, caſt chains, and fetters,

ters, reſtraints, hindrances, and impediments upon the ſoul, that the ſoul is hindred from many high and noble actings, which in a ſtate of ſeparation it is free to. In a ſtate of ſeparation the ſoul works clearer, and underſtands better, and diſcourſes wiſer, and rejoyces louder, and loves noblier, and deſires purer, and hopes ſtronger then it can doe here.

When *Plato* ſaw one over indulgent to his body, by high feeding it, he aſkt him what he meant to make his Priſon ſo ſtrong.

'Tis reported of *Apollonius*, That he had a familiar ſpirit engaged in a Jewel. Such is the ſoul of man in the body; the ſoul while it is in this body of clay, cannot act like her ſelf, like a ſpirit whoſe nature is to ſoar aloft towards the place whence ſhe came. When the ſoul is upon the wings for Heaven, the body like a lump of lead puls it down to the Earth, *&c.*

Now the ſoul cannot look out at the eyes, but it wilbe infected, nor hear by the ears, but it will be diſtracted, nor ſmell at the noſtrils, and not be tainted, taſt by the tongue, and not be allured, and touch by the hand, and not be defiled. Every ſenſe and member is too ready upon every occaſion and temptation, to betray the ſoul, which ſhould make us willing to dye, and to long for that day wherein our bodies ſhall be glorified.

The Greeks call the body the ſouls bond, the ſouls Sepulchre.

Ah believers, it will be but as a day before thoſe bodies of yours, that are now

like a Picture out of frame, or a house out of repair that are now deformed and diseased *&c* shall be agile and nimble,
Mat. 17. 2. swift and facile in their motion, for clarity and brightnesse they shall be like Christs body when it was transfigured, they shall be very amiable and beautiful, they shall be impassible and immortal. Here our bodies are still dying. It is more proper to ask when we shall make an end of dying, then to ask when we shall dye. Death is a Worm that is alwayes feeding at the Root of our lives, which should make death more desirable then life.

Luke 2. 28, 29, 30. Ninthly, Dwell much upon the readinesse and willingnesse of other Saints to dye. Good old *Simeon* having first laid Christ in his heart, and then taking him up in his arms, he sings, *Lord now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have lived enough, I have my life; I have long'd enough, I have my love; I have seen enough, I have my sight; I have serv'd enough, I have my reward; I have sorrowed enough, I have my joy. So the be-
2 Cor. 5. lieving *Corinthians*, they groaned earnestly to be cloathed upon with their house which is from Heaven, they groaned that mortality might be swallowed up of life, and *that they might be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.*

So

So *Paul* desires earnestly *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.* So those in *Peter, they look for and hasten the coming of the day of God.* They are said to hasten the day of God, in respect of their earnest desires after it, and in respect of their preparations for it. So the souls under the Altar, cry, *How long Lord, how long?* &c.

Phil. 1. 23. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Rev. 6. 9, 10.

So *Paula*, that Noble Lady, when one did read to her, *Cant.* 2. 11. *The winter is past, and the singing of Birds is come.* *Yea*, she replied, *the singing of Birds is come*, and so she went singing into Heaven. So *Juel, Lord now let thy servant depart in peace, break off all delayes, Lord receive my spirit.* Further he said, *I have not so lived, that I am ashamed to live longer; neither doe I fear to dye, because we have a mercifull Lord, a Crown of righteousnesse is laid up for me, Christ is my righteousnesse.* So another being in a swound, (as her friends thought) a little before her end, they cryed give her some *Rosa solis*, but she put it back, saying, *I have Rosa solis you know not of.* So Mr. *Pearing* a little before his death, said, *I find and feele so much inward joy and comfort in my soule, that if I were put to my choyce whether to dye or live, I would a thousand times rather choose death then life, if it might stand with the holy will of God.* So

Let all the Devils in hell (saith *Augustine*) beset me round, let fasting macerate my body, let sorrowes oppresse my mind, let pains consume my flesh, let watching dry me, or heat scorch me, or cold freeze me; let all these, and what can come more, happen unto me, so I may enjoy my Saviour.

Mr. *Bolton* lying on his death-bed, ſaid, *I am by the wonderfull mercies of God, as full of comfort as my heart can hold, and feele nothing in my ſoul but Chriſt, with whom I heartily deſire to be.* Ah Chriſtians! if the exceeding willingneſſe of the Saints to dye, will not make you willing to dye, what will?

Pſal. 23. 4. Heb. 13. 5.

Tenthly and laſtly, conſider this, that the Lord will not leave thee, but be with thee in that hour. *Yea though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evill, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaffe they comfort me,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt. So the Apoſtle, *Let your converſation be without covetouſneſſe, and be content with ſuch things as you have, for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* There are five Negatives in the Greek, to aſſure Gods people that he will never forſake them; five times in Scripture is this precious Promiſe renewed, that we may preſſe it till we have preſſed the ſweetneſſe out of it. Though God may ſeem to leave thee, thou mayſt be confident he will never forſake thee. Why ſhould that man be afraid of death, that may be alwayes confident of the preſence of the Lord of life?

Maximilian the Emperor was ſo delighted with that ſentence, *Si Deus nobiſcum,* If God be with us, who ſhalbe againſt us, that he cauſed it to be written upon the wals in moſt rooms of his Palace.

The next Uſe ſhall be to ſtir you all up to prepare & fit for your dying day. Ah Chriſtians, what is your whole life but

a day to fit for the hour of death? what is your great buſineſſe in this world, but to prepare and fit for another world? It was a ſad ſpeech of *Caſar Borgias*, who being ſick to death, ſaid, *When I lived I provided for every thing but death, now I muſt dye, and am unprovided to dye.* Ah Chriſtians, you have need every day to pray with *Moſes, Lord teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts to wiſedome.* And to follow the counſel of the Prophet *Jeremiah, Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſſe, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſſe darkneſſe.* Old age is the dark mountain which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way cragged. It is a high point of heavenly wiſedome, to conſider hour latter end. *O that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end.* *Jeruſalem* paid dear for forgetting her latter end. *Jeruſalems* filthineſſe was in her skirts, becauſe ſhe remembred not her latter end, therefore alſo ſhe came down wonderfully. To provoke you to prepare and fit for a dying day, conſider ſeriouſly theſe following things.

Pſal. 90. 13. Jer. 13. 16.

Deut. 23. 19.

James 1. 9.

1 He that prepares not for his dying day, runs the hazard of looſing his im-

Aut pœnitendi aut perendi.

mortall ſoul. Though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is ſeldome true. The Heathen man could ſay, *He that is not ready to repent to day, will be leſſe ready to morrow; his underſtanding will be more dark, his heart more hard, his will more crooked, his affections more diſtempered, his conſcience more benummed,* &c. *Beda* tels a ſtory of a certain great man, that was admoniſhed in his ſickneſs to repent, who anſwered, *That he would not yet, for if he ſhould recover, his companions would laugh at him*; but growing ſicker and ſicker, his friends preſſed him again to repent, but then he told them it was too late (*Quia jam judicatus ſum & condemnatus*) *For now* (ſaid he) *I am judged and condemned.* It is the greateſt wiſedome in the world, to doe that every day, that a man would doe on a dying day. And to be afraid to live in ſuch an eſtate as a man would be afraid to dye in. Ah ſouls, you are afraid to dye in ſuch and ſuch ſins, and will you not be afraid to live in thoſe ſins?

2 Again, the certainty of death ſhould beſpeak you to prepare for death. When we would affirm any thing to be infallibly true, we ſay, *As ſure as death. It is appointed* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *unto men once to dye, but after this the judgement.* The Greek word that is Tranſlated, *It is ap-*

appointed, signifieth, it lyeth as a mans lot: *Once*, implies two things. 1 A certainty, it shall once be. 2 A singularity, it will be but once. *What man lives and shall not see death?* (saith the Psalmist) That is, no man lives and shall not see death. In *Job* the Grave is called *The house appointed for all the living*. *Solomon* cals the Grave (*Baiith Gnolam*, i. e. *Domum seculi*) *The House of age*; the Learned Translate it *Long home*, where men must abide for a long time, even till the Resurrection. To live without fear of death. is to dye living; to labour not to dye, is labour in vain. Death hath for its Motto, *Nulli cedo, I yield to none.* 'Tis decreed that *all must dye*. Every mans death-day is his dooms-day.

Heb. 9. 27. ἀπόκειται
Psal. 89. 48.
Job 30. 23.
Eccles. 12. 5.
בחעולם

The *French* have a Proverb, *Three things* (say they) *agree in the world, the Priest, the Lawyer, and Death*. The Priest takes the living and the dead, the Lawyer right and wrong, and Death the weak and strong. But the *Jewes* have a better, *In Galgotha are to be seen skuls of all sizes*; that is, Death comes on the young as well as the old, the Lot is fallen upon all, and therefore all must dye. All men are made of one mold and matter. *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. All have sinned, are fallen short of the glory of God*, and therefore death must passe upon all. 3 The

Adam of *Adamah*, *homo ab humo*.
Gen. 3 19.
Rom. 5. 12.

3 The uncertainty of the time of your death do's bespeak you with open mouth to be in a constant readinesse and preparedness for death. No man knows when he shall dye, nor what kind of death he shall dye, whether a naturall or a violent death. *Augustus* died in a Complement. *Tiberius* in dissimulation. *Galba* with a sentence. *Vespasian* with a jest. *Zeuxes* died laughing at the Picture of an old woman which he drew with his owne hand. *Sophocles* was choaked with the stone in a Grape. *Diodorus* the Logician dyed for shame that he could not answer a joculary Question propounded at the Table by *Stilpo*. *Joannes Masius* Preaching upon the raising of the woman of *Naomi's* Son from the dead, within three hours after dyed himself. *Fœlix* Earl of *Wartenberg*, sitting at Supper with many of his Friends, some at the Table fell into discourse about *Luther*, and the peoples generall receiving his Doctrine, upon which the Earl swore a great Oath, *That before he died he would ride up to the spurs in the blood of Lutherans*; but the very same night God stretched out his hand so against him, that he was choaked with his own blood.

Bibulus a Roman Generall riding in triumph in all his glory, a Tyle fel from a house in the street, and beat out his brains.

Consider in the last place, That it is a solemn thing to dye. Death is a solemn parting of two near friends, soul and body.

dy. Remember, all other preparations are to no purpoſe, if a man be not prepared to dye. What will it avail a man to prepare this and that for his children, kindred or friends, *&c.* when he hath made no preparations for his ſoul, for his eternal wel-being? As death leaves you, ſo judgement ſhall find you. If death take you before you expect it, and are prepared for it, it will be the more terrible to you; it will cauſe your countenance to be changed, your thoughts to be troubled, your loins to be looſed, and your knees to be daſhed one againſt another. Oh the Hell of horrors and terrors that attends thoſe ſouls that have their greateſt work to doe when they come to dye; therefore as you love your ſouls, & as you would be happy in death, and everlaſtingly bleſſed after death, prepare and fit for death. Look that you build upon nothing below Chriſt, look that you have a real intereſt in Chriſt, look that you dye daily to ſin, to the world, and to your own righteouſneſſe. Look that conſcience be alwayes waking, ſpeaking, and tender; look that Chriſt be your Lord and Maſter; look that all reckonings ſtand right betwixt the Lord and your ſouls; look that you be fruitful, faithful and watchful, and then your dying day ſhall be to you as the day of harveſt

He that prepares for his body and friends, but neglects his ſoul, is like him that prepares for his ſlave, but neglects his wife.

When I was young (ſaith *Seneca* the Heathen) I then ſtudied *Artem bene vivendi*, the Art of living well, when Age came upon me, I then ſtudied *Artem bene moriendi*, the Art of dying well.

harveſt to the Husband-man, as the day deliverance to the Priſoner, as the day of Coronation to the King, and as the day of Marriage to the Bride. Your dying day ſhall be a day of triumph and exaltation, a day of freedom and conſolation, a day of reſt and ſatisfaction. Then the Lord Jeſus ſhall be as Honey in the mouth, Oyntment in the noſtrils, muſick in the ear, and a Jubilee in the heart.

A great man wrote thus a little before his death, *Spes & fortuna valete*. Hope and fortune farewell.

The laſt Uſe then is this, If a believers laſt day be his beſt day, then by the Rule of contraries, a wicked mans laſt day muſt be his worſt day, for he muſt there lye down with the ſins of his youth. Death ſhall put an end to all the benefits and comforts that now thou enjoyeſt. Now thou muſt ſay honours, friends, pleaſures, riches, credit, *&c.* farewell for ever, I ſhall never have good day more, I ſhall never be merry more; my Sun is ſet, my glaſſe is out, my hopes fail, my heart fails; all offers of grace are paſt, the Spirit will never ſtrive with me more, free grace will never move me more, the golden Serpent ſhall never be held forth more, death will be an inlet to judgement, yea, to an eternity of miſery. What the voyce was of God to *Adam* upon eating the forbidden fruit, what the coming of the flood was to the prophane men of the old world, what the waters

Sigiſmund the Emperor, and *Lewis* the 11 of *France*, ſtraitly charged all their ſervants, that they ſhould not dare to name that bitter word Death, when they ſaw them ſick, ſo dreadfull was the very thoughts of death to them.

of

of the red Sea were to *Pharaoh* and his Army, what the fire from Heaven was to the Captains that came up againſt *Eliah*, what the burning Furnace was to them that caſt in *Shadrach*, *Meſhec*, and *Abed-nego*, the ſame will be the day of death to prophane wicked ſouls. Ah ſinners, my prayer for you ſhall be, That the Lord would awaken you, and ſet up a choyce light in your ſouls, that you may ſee where you are, and what you are; that he would give you to break off your ſins by repentance, and give you an intereſt in himſelf, that ſo *For you to live may be Chriſt, and to dye may be gain.* That *in life and death Chriſt may be advantage to you*; and that death may be the Funeral of all your ſins and ſorrows, and an inlet to all that joy and pleaſure, that bleſſedneſſe and happineſſe that is at Gods right hand.

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